



First day in Grade 000, Grade 0 and Grade 1

FROM THE HEADMISTRESS' DESK

Dear parents

Happy new year to all our St Mary's families, old and new – it has been a pleasure getting to know your daughters and many of you, and I continue to maintain my “newness” despite encountering great opposition from my deputies. In response to their howls of derision, I gently, but firmly assert that to adopt any other attitude in an institution that is 130 years old would be nothing short of insubordinate.

As I remarked in my letter to you earlier this week, 2018 is a significant moment in the school's long history: the founding of St Mary's, almost coterminous with the emergence of “the poorly behaved urban delinquent” Johannesburg, is worthy of celebration; even more so, is the school's heroic survival in the face of great adversity in its early years. I am in the process of rereading the school's centenary book, and not out of a sense of duty either: it's a compelling story, enlivened by a cast of incorrigibly strident women, voluble schoolgirls, and some creditable men, all located in a volatile historical setting.

As I am sure is the case with most of us, my reading never follows one direction, and even more so in the school holidays when the luxury of more time and an altered mindset allows our thoughts to range more broadly. One text informs another and makes the rereading of familiar books surprisingly strange. In this instance, my revisiting the St Mary's centenary book was interpellated with writing and imagery from several other sources, including a short pictorial essay on a school in Japan published in *Monocle*

magazine. I am going to quote the caption accompanying the image of very young children clambering up a steep hill in full:

“Hiroshima's Tampopo kindergarten, opened in the 1980s, believes an early outdoor life makes for well-rounded adults, especially when coupled with a balanced *kyushoku* (school lunch) compiled by nutritionists. Our favourite recreation is the daily hill roll: children run up the hill and, yes, roll to the bottom. Over and over again. Naturally, they go home in need of a good night's sleep.”

The picture and its caption clicked with what I had been reading of St Mary's history with a magnetic force that is usually reserved for dreams: more than a predictable homily about St Mary's being like the cheerfully resilient children with its ability to pick itself up, dust off, and climb to the top of the hill again over the past 130 years, the juxtaposition of the different sources stirred other feelings in me. It's the mood of the picture that commands attention – a heady mix of something like exhilaration and pragmatism evident in the children's facial expressions and body language as they embark repeatedly on their steep ascent of the hill “and, yes, roll to the bottom”. What the picture shows is what makes the pages of the school centenary book sing: a robust appetite for more and a readiness to engage. Over and over again.

DR SARAH WARNER
HEADMISTRESS: JUNIOR SCHOOL

FROM THE CHAPLAIN

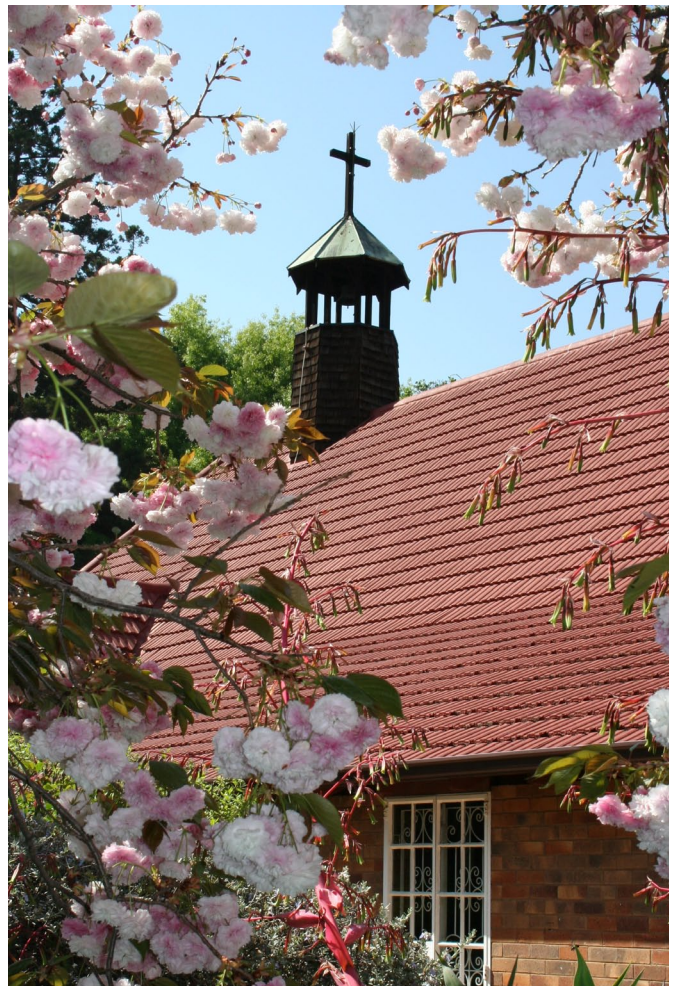
¹⁶ As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. ¹⁷ And Jesus said to them, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people.” ¹⁸ And immediately they left their nets and followed him. ¹⁹ As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. ²⁰ Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

Mark 1:16-20

In *Prophets in Their Own Country: Women Religious Bearing Witness to the Gospel in a Troubled Church* (2011), theologian Sandra Schneiders points out that there are various forms of discipleship evident among those who chose to follow Christ in biblical times. For example, there were those called to give up livelihood, family, home and dreams in order to live life with Christ. However, there were also those such as Mary, Martha and Lazarus, called to relationship with Christ within the context of their family and household. There was also the Gerasene demoniac, who once cured, wanted to join Christ's band of itinerant disciples, but who Jesus sent back to minister to his own people who would not allow Christ himself to minister to them.

We are first called into relationship with Christ, and then to be disciples according to our gifting, as required by the time, place and situation in which Christ places us. Let us spend time, this week, in our respective “boats” - places of work and household contexts - listening for the voice of Christ who loves us, and who calls us to be disciples.

**REVD CLAUDIA COUSTAS
CHAPLAIN**



DANCE

The dance and drama project offers Royal Academy of Dance ballet training, Dance Mouse/Madness (modern styles) and Drama to the Junior School.

Jaydene Adolf will be teaching Dance Mouse to Grades 000 and 00 and Willemien Jerling and Claire van Niekerk will teach Dance Mouse/Madness to Grade 0 to 7. Michelle Emslie teaches RAD Ballet and Kyle de Boere is continuing with junior drama.

All the information you need to know regarding these co-curricular activities can be found on the website www.5678productions.co.za from timetable, fee and teacher information as well as how to register.

Ballet girls will be able to do their RAD exam work as well as badge tests through Michelle.

Modern dance

All junior modern dance from Grade 0 to Grade 3 will be instructed in the Dance Mouse syllabus and Dance Madness from Grade 4 to 7. This will allow the girls to experience a diverse programme and expose them to many different forms of dance through a fun and age-appropriate syllabus.

There will be a fun assessment in October for medals and certificates and the girls may enter into the annual Barnyard Festival for a full performance experience.

Drama

We aim to develop self confidence, concentration, language and communication skills in fun and creative ways. Drama encourages the children to co-operate, supports numeracy skills, assists physical and emotional development and helps them to understand the world around them. It will aid them in all future experiences in the St Mary's cultural arena. They will also get an opportunity to perform on stage and choose to enter into the national eistedfodd.



For more info:
call 083 226 2871

**CLAIRE VAN NIEKERK
5678 PRODUCTIONS**



The dance and drama project offers Royal Academy of Dance ballet training, Dance Mouse/Madness (modern styles) and Drama to the Junior School

FROM THE SPORTS DEPARTMENT



DIVING

The beginning of the December holidays for the St Mary's divers started off at the Kingspark Aquatics Centre in Durban. Six St Mary's girls qualified for the Gauteng schools' diving team to compete in South African Schools' Championships held on 9 December. I am proud to say that St Mary's was the only school to have this number of girls qualify for the team.

On Saturday morning the atmosphere at the pool was overwhelming as all the provincial teams arrived to compete. In the shadow of the 2010

Moses Mabhida soccer stadium, the divers gave it their best to achieve a placing in the prestigious event. The St Mary's divers pulled off some spectacular dives to aid Gauteng into second place.

Results of the St Mary's divers:

11 years

1st Zalika Methula

12 Years

5th Georgina Spalding

13 years

1st Laura Loveland

2nd Caitlin Kersten

14 years

3rd Kerry-leigh Morrison

15 and 16 years

3rd Alexandra Kerstein

Congratulations to all the girls who competed.

**KATE SHEPHERD
SWIMMING COACH**



Back: Alexandra Kerstein, Zalika Methula, Kate Shepherd, Laura Loveland, Caitlin Kersten
Front: Georgina Spalding



Zalika Methula celebrating with her certificate



Rooted

A study in Colossians to deepen our faith in Jesus Christ

Join us for **Bible study** this term on **Monday mornings at 07h30 in the Physio room** (at the bottom of the stairs in the Pitt block).

The St Mary's Moms' Bible study is a group of women who are keen to know and love God more deeply and are committed to looking after and praying for each other. This term we trust that we will build the roots required for a fruitful life, as we walk together through Colossians chapter by chapter, verse by verse. **All are welcome!**

Contact Rosie for further information on 0824141762; Email: moorerosemary534@gmail.com